

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-10 NSCE-00 SAJ-01

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SPC-01 ACDA-10 SAM-01

OMB-01 EUR-10 IO-03 DRC-01 /080 W

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P R 061204Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 398

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

CINCPAC

S/DIA

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 2069

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH, US

SUBJECT: ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL'S MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER

SANYA THAMMASAK

VIENTIANE FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL

SUMMARY: ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL MET WITH PRIME MINISTER SANYA THAMMASAK FEBRUARY 6. SANYA UNDERLINED THE HISTORICALLY CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THAILAND AND THE U.S. MR. INGERSOLL SAID THAT THERE WAS A GOOD BASIS FOR CONTINUING THIS RELATIONSHIP, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF THE NEW POLITICAL TREND IN THAILAND TOWARD PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY. THEY DISCUSSED INDOCHINESE SECURITY PROBLEMS IN SOME DETAIL, PARTICULARLY THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA AND LAOS, AS WELL AS THE NORTH VIETNAMESE POSTURE IN THE REGION. MR. INGERSOLL CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT AS LONG AS CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION CONTINUE TO BUILD UP THEIR MILITARY STRENGTH, AND AS LONG AS NORTH VIETNAM CONTINUES TO THREATEN SOUTH

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VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA, THE MOMENT IS NOT PROPITIOUS FOR U.S.

TROOP WITHDRAWALS FROM THAILAND. AS THE THREAT GOES DOWN,
SO MAY OUR FORCES. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIME MINISTER SANYA THAMMASAK, IN THE COMPANY OF
FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN ISARANGKUN NA AYUTHAYA, RECEIVED
ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL AND AMBASSADOR KINTNER AT
GOVERNMENT HOUSE ON FEBRUARY 6. MR. INGERSOLL COMMENTED
THAT HE WAS HAPPY TO HAVE A CHANCE TO VISIT THAILAND, AND SANYA
REPLIED THAT THE U.S. AND THAILAND HAD HISTORICALLY BEEN CLOSE
TOGETHER IN ALL RESPECTS. IN AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE RELIANCE
ON PERSONAL FRIENDSHIPS, SANYA INQUIRED ABOUT AMBASSADORS JOHNSON
AND UNGER.

2. MR. INGERSOLL TOLD SANYA THAT HE HAD MENTIONED TO THE FOREIGN
MINISTER THE PREVIOUS EVENING THAT THAILAND WAS GOING IN A DIFFE-
RENT DIRECTION, AND THE NEW POLITICAL TREND IN THAILAND WAS
AN ENCOURAGING SIGN FOR THE COUNTRY AS WELL AS FOR ASIA. SANYA
REJOINED THAT THERE WERE MANY PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED BEFORE THE
GENERAL ELECTIONS TOOK PLACE, AN EVENT THAT HE HOPED WOULD OCCUR
BEFORE THE ADVENT OF THE RAINS IN MID-MAY. SANYA SAID THAT ALL
"DEPENDS ON OUR ASSEMBLY." IF THE ASSEMBLY HASTENS TO DO ITS
WORK THOROUGHLY, THE ELECTIONS WILL BE TIMELY. AMBASSADOR
KINTNER MENTIONED THAT HE HAD TALKED WITH NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY (NLA) SPEAKER KUKIRT PRAMOJ THE PREVIOUS EVENING.
SANYA ASKED WHAT KUKIRT HAD SAID ABOUT THE ELECTIONS. THE
AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT KUKIRT SAID THAT HE COULDN'T GUARANTEE
THAT THE NLA WOULD MEET THE DEADLINE, BUT THAT HE WOULD DO HIS
BEST TO SEE THAT IT DID.

3. MR. INGERSOLL SAID THAT HE WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE GREAT
CARE WITH WHICH THE NLA IS GOING OVER EACH SECTION OF THE
CONSTITUTION. SANYA POINTED OUT THAT THE NLA HAD BEEN INDIRECTLY
ELECTED. ITS MEMBERS DID NOT ADHERE TO ANY POLITICAL PARTY AND
SOME SAID THAT THE 299 ASSEMBLYMEN BELONG TO 299 PARTIES.
ALL THE ASSEMBLYMEN WERE FREE AGENTS. MR. INGERSOLL SAID THAT
THEY ALSO HAD ONLY ONE INTEREST, THAT OF THAILAND, AND THAT THEY
HAD AN UNUSUAL OPPORTUNITY TO COME UP WITH A CONSTITUTION OF BEST
ADVANTAGE TO EVERYONE. SANYA SAID THAT EDUCATED THAI, NOT ONLY
THE STUDENTS, ARE NOW MORE INSISTENT THAN THEY USED TO BE ON
THEIR RIGHTS OF PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT. MR. INGERSOLL
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REMARKED THAT IT WAS ENCOURAGING TO FIND ANY COUNTRY WHERE THE
CITIZENS FELT A PART OF THE POLITICAL PROCESS. SANYA AFFIRMED
THAT THE THAI FELT THAT THE COUNTRY BELONGS TO THEM. MR.
INGERSOLL AGAIN TOLD SANYA THAT THE U.S. APPRECIATED THIS DEVE-
LOPMENT TOWARD PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY, AS WELL AS THE CLOSE
ASSOCIATION THAT THE U.S. HAS ENJOYED WITH THAILAND OVER THE
YEARS.

4. SANYA THEN ELABORATED ON THE TEMA THAT "THE GENERAL OF THAI PEOPLE TO WHICH WE BELONG STILL APPRECIATES AMERICAN HELP." SANYA POINTED OUT THAT THE U.S. WAS THE FIRST WESTERN GOVERNMENT TO REALLY HELP THAILAND, AND PRAISED THE AMERICAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER IN THE MID-TWENTIES, FRANCIS B. SAYRE. A SECOND EXAMPLE OF U.S. SUPPORT OCCURRED AT THE END OF WORLD WAR II, "IN WHICH WE WERE SO BRAVE TO DECLARE WAR AGAINST THE ALLIES." SANYA RECALLED THAT THE BRITISH HAD TAKEN THE POSITION THAT THE THAI SHOULD PAY REPARATIONS, AND WERE SEEKING SO MUCH COMPENSATION, PRINCIPALLY IN THE FORM OF RICE, THAT THAILAND WAS ON THE VERGE OF BANKRUPTCY. SANYA SAID THAT THE U.S. INTERVENTION TO TALK THE BRITISH OUT OF THIS APPROACH REMAINS "DEEPLY IN OUR MINDS." MR. INGERSOLL COMMENTED THAT THERE WAS THUS A SOUND BASIS FOR CONTINUING THIS HISTORICALLY CLOSE RELATIONSHIP. HE ADDED, "WE CERTAINLY APPRECIATE THE HELP YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN US IN SOUTHEAST ASIA."

5. SANYA ASKED ABOUT THE CAMBODIAN SITUATION. MR. INGERSOLL REPLIED THAT IT WAS LOOKING BETTER. THE ENEMY HAD BEEN CLOSE TO THE CAPITAL IN MID AND LATE JANUARY, BUT THE GOVERNMENT HAD TAKEN A HEAVY TOLL OF ENEMY FORCES. SANYA ASKED, "WHO IS THE ENEMY IN CAMBODIA, THE KHMER ROUGE, SIHANOUK'S ALLIES, OR THE NORTH VIETNAMESE?" MR. INGERSOLL SAID THAT HE THOUGHT IT WAS ALL THREE, BUT THAT THERE WAS NOT MUCH EVIDENCE THAT THE SIHANOUK FORCES WERE FIGHTING AROUND PHNOM PENH. THE CRUCIAL FACTOR WAS NORTH VIETNAMESE SUPPLIES. THE KHMER COMMUNISTS COULD NOT SURVIVE UNLESS THEY HAD THEM. IF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WOULD WITHDRAW THEIR SUPPORT, THE CAMBODIANS COULD HANDLE THE SITUATION ON THEIR OWN. SANYA REPLIED, "THAT'S WHAT WE REALLY WANT, THAT THE CAMBODIANS SETTLE THEIR AFFAIRS AMONG THEMSELVES." MR. INGERSOLL SAID THAT HE HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT FORCES COULD HOLD OFF THE COMMUNISTS DURING THE CURRENT DRY SEASON.

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LIMDIS

6. SANYA SAID THAT HE WAS AWARE THAT THE U.S. HAD A DIALOGUE WITH THE PRC, BUT WHAT ABOUT NORTH VIETNAM? MR. INGERSOLL REPLIED THAT WE WERE NOT TAKING VERY WELL WITH NORTH VIETNAM THESE DAYS EXCEPT FOR THE DECEMBER MEETING BETWEEN SECRETARY KISSINGER AND LE DUC THO IN PARIS. HE ADDED THAT HE DID NOT THINK THAT THE PRC HAD MUCH EFFECT ON THE CAMBODIAN SITUATION. THE ONLY WAY WAS FOR CHINA, AND PARTICULARLY THE SOVIET UNION, TO REDUCE THE FLOW OF ARMAMENTS TO NORTH VIETNAM, WHICH IN TURN SUPPLIES THE KHMER COMMUNISTS. CHARUNPHAN ASKED WHICH COUNTRY HAD THE UPPER HAND IN NORTH VIETNAM. MR. INGERSOLL REPLIED THAT AS FAR AS WAR MATERIAL IS CONCERNED, THE SOVIETS WERE SUPPLYING A MUCH LARGER PORTION. THE AMBASSADOR POINTED THAT THERE IS HISTORICAL ANIMOSITY BETWEEN THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AND CHINESE, AND THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE PREFER TO DEAL WITH A MORE DISTANT ALLY. SANYA ASKED WHETHER IT WAS TRUE THAT THERE WAS A POWER STRUGGLE IN NORTH VIETNAM. MR. INGERSOLL REPLIED THAT ALWAYS IN A COUNTRY LIKE THAT THERE IS A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION BETWEEN THOSE WHO WANT TO RECONSTRUCT IT AND THOSE WHO WANT TO CARRY ON FIGHTING. AMBASSADOR KINTNER SAID THAT WE HAD GREAT DIFFICULTY IN FINDING OUT WHAT SECRET

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GOES ON AMONG THE LEADERS OF NORTH VIETNAM. MR. INGERSOLL SAID THAT THE NORTH KOREAN LEADERSHIP PRESENTED A SIMILAR PROBLEM. HE SAID THAT THE U.S. ADMIRER SOUTH VIETNAMESE AND CAMBODIAN EFFORTS TO HAVE THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT, AND AVOID HANOI'S EFFORTS TO DOMINATE INDOCHINA. SANYA ASKED WHETHER HANOI'S EFFORTS WERE INCLUSIVE OF THAILAND. MR. INGERSOLL SAID THAT HE BELIEVED THAT THE FIRST NORTH VIETNAMESE GOAL WAS SOUTH VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA.

7. MR. INGERSOLL POINTED OUT THAT LAOS SEEMS TO HAVE AGREED TO A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT AND APPEARS TO BE MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AS LONG AS NORTH VIETNAM DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH THE PROCESS. CHARUNPHAN ASKED WHETHER THE TERM "HO CHI MINH TRAIL" REFERRED TO ROADS IN BOTH LAOS AND SOUTH VIETNAM. THE ANSWER WAS YES. CHARUNPHAN'S INTERPRETATION OF NORTH VIETNAMESE PRESENCE ALONG THE TRAIL IN LAOS WAS THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WANTED TO DOMINATE THAT SECTION OF THE COUNTRY. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE LAO PROBLEM WAS SOLELY UP TO NORTH VIETNAM. IF NORTH VIETNAM WITHDREW ITS FORCES, THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM. MR. INGERSOLL MENTIONED THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE, IN SIGNING THE PARIS ACCORDS, HAD AGREED TO MOVE OUT, BUT HAD NOT YET DONE SO. CHARUNPHAN SAID THAT HE HAD SERVED OVER FOUR YEARS AS AMBASSADOR TO LAOS. HE HAD NOTED THAT NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES COULD MOVE OUT OF OR INTO THE COUNTRY IN TWO HOURS' TIME. THE PATHET LAO REQUIRED TWO DAYS' NOTICE FOR ICC VISITS, THUS GIVING PLENTY OF TIME FOR THE NORTH VIETNAMESE TO CLEAR OUT OF THE SCENE. CHARUNPHAN CONCLUDED BY SAYING, "SOMETIMES I CAN'T BE OPTIMISTIC ON THE AFFAIRS OF LAOS."

8. AMBASSADOR KINTNER SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THAT THE CHINESE WITH THEIR PRESENCE IN NORTHWEST LAOS WERE A RESTRAINING INFLUENCE ON THE NORTH VIETNAMESE. SANYA ASKED ABOUT THE ROAD TOWARD THE THAI BORDER THROUGH THAT REGION. THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT THE CHINESE HAD TAKEN THEIR ANTI-AIRCRAFT TROOPS AWAY, BUT OF COURSE COULD MOVE BACK ON SHORT NOTICE. THE CHINESE WERE NEVERTHELESS NOT SO CONSPICUOUS AS THEY WERE SIX MONTHS AGO. MR. INGERSOLL SUGGESTED THAT THE CHINESE TROOP WITHDRAWAL WAS PERHAPS A SIGNAL TO NORTH VIETNAM THAT IT SHOULD DO LIKEWISE. CHARUNPHAN SAID THAT THE THAI "PLACED THE HOPE FOR PEACE ON THE MAJOR POWERS IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD; NOT ONLY THE U.S., BUT ALSO CHINA AND THE SOVIETS."

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9. MR. INGERSOLL MENTIONED THAT THE PRC, THE SOVIET UNION, AND NORTH VIETNAM WERE ALL CONTINUING TO BUILD UP THEIR MILITARY STRENGTH. AS LONG AS THIS SITUATION PERSISTS, THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR U.S. TROOP WITHDRAWALS FROM THAILAND. AS THE THREAT GOES DOWN, WE WILL REDUCE OUR FORCES HERE. HE STRESSED THAT REMOVING OUR FORCES PRECIPITOUSLY WOULD GIVE THE WRONG SIGNAL TO NORTH VIETNAM AND COULD STIMULATE MILITARY ACTION. HE HOPED THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WOULD EXECUTE NO MAJOR THRUST DURING THE CURRENT DRY SEASON.

10. COMMENT: SANYA'S CORDIALITY, AND HIS STRESS ON THE HISTORIC THAI-AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP, INDICATE THAT THE RTG CONTINUES TO DESIRE CONTINUED AND CLOSE BILATERAL COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES. THE JANUARY EPISODE OF THE BOGUS CIA LETTER DID NOT ARISE. THERE WAS NO THAI REQUEST FOR A U.S. TROOP

DRAWDOWN. EXCEPT FOR AN EXTENSIVE DISCUSSION OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY OF NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, THE MEETING WAS A MARKED DEPARTURE FROM THE ABSORPTION WITH MILITARY MATTERS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE THANOM REGIME. THE PRINCIPAL THRUST, COVERED IN A SEPARATE TELEGRAM, WAS "ECONOMIC COOPERATION, NOT JUST ECONOMIC AID."

KINTNER

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